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this week:

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Thursday, December 26, 2013 - Wednesday, January 1, 2014

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PITCHING IN!

Consultations to be launched on new sports facilities

By Jack Johnson

jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Building work starts on special school



See page 11

DIDCOT'S residents are set to be consulted on a new sport and recreational facility that could boost the town's rugby and cricket teams.

The consultation will be with regard to a proposed acquisition of 25 acres of land at Hall Farm, Hadden Hill, for sporting and leisure facilities.

Town council leader Margaret Davies says a desired date for a consultation will be in February, adding that the area would not just be for rugby and cricket pitches but also for other leisure facilities.

"We have spoken over the past few years to Didcot Rugby Club and to Didcot Cricket Club, both of whom are quite desperate for a home ground and club house," Cllr Davies said.

"Cricket and rugby use the same piece of land at different times of year and always work well together so we can get more use out of the same pitch but it is not exclusively for them.

"For instance there are many people who play hockey in Didcot and they have to go to Wallingford.

"We can hopefully put some

allotments up as well."

Paul Costello, chairman of Didcot Cricket Club and secretary of the town's Rugby club, welcomed the news.

He said: "Both clubs have been looking for a permanent home for some years now in order to continue their development and grow.

"A permanent home would be something that would be very much welcomed."

The rugby club currently hire a pitch at Edmonds Park while the junior team plays at The Triangle.

Meanwhile, the cricket club use a pitch in the grounds of the power station, but also hire out a facility in Crowmarsh.

Mr Costello added: "The clubs will continue to talk to any parties that will potentially help them develop in the future."

A Sport and Leisure study by South Oxfordshire District Council has identified a shortfall in sport and leisure provision in Didcot.

Cllr Davies said: "This will contribute a lot in improving that.

"It is really good news that we have at long last found a land owner who has been having talks with us and we think we are nearly there now."

After the consultation, the town council will look to complete their negotiations with the landowner and seek planning permission from SODC.

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A34 set for £10m slip road boost



• Cllr Ian Hudspeth welcomes the planned improvements for the Chilton Interchange

THE Department for Transport has allocated £5million of funding from its Local Pinch Point Fund, to be used on improvements on the A34.

North-facing slip roads at the Chilton Interchange will be added, in a bid to improve transport links between Oxford and the Science Vale Enterprise Zone around Harwell.

At the moment the junction does not have access to and from the north, and it is believed that adding the slip roads will reduce traffic in the area.

As well as government funding, the £10million scheme will also be supported with money from the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Cllr Ian Hudspeth, leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said: "This is great news which demonstrates the government's confidence in our ambitions to improve transport and drive investment and innovation in that area."

"The government's announcement and the support of the Local Enterprise Partnership means that we can now begin work on planning the delivery

By Adam Flinn

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of the road scheme.

"By adding north-facing slips at Chilton Interchange, we will provide confidence and reliability in the transport network and encourage further business investment in the Enterprise Zone."

Nigel Tipple, chief executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership, added: "We welcome this critical investment to support the Enterprise Zone and wider growth."

It is hoped that the scheme will also help to reduce the use of local roads in the area, as well as alleviate the pressure on the nearby Milton Interchange.

As a result, it is expected to create a direct route between the two Enterprise Zones of Milton Park and Harwell.

The news comes after fresh calls were made by Oxford West and Abingdon MP Nicola Blackwood for a similar scheme at Lodge Hill, which only has slip roads to and from the north.

Consultation extended into the New Year

A CONSULTATION on plans to change the county council's home-to-school transport policy has been extended into the New Year.

Proposals include options to save money by reducing the range of schools to which children would qualify for free transport. However, in order to give people further opportunity to submit their views, the deadline for comments has been extended until January 14.

Oxfordshire County Council Leader Ian Hudspeth said: "There has been huge interest in these proposals and we want to ensure we are giving people as much opportunity as possible to have their say and contribute to the consultation process."

"We don't want anyone to miss out on the chance to comment and from a purely practical perspective, it also gives our officers more time to go through the responses we have already received and present the cabinet with a truly comprehensive picture of public opinion when we come to make a decision."

A final decision is now due to be made at a special cabinet meeting, with a date to be announced in due course.

Anyone who has yet to submit their views should visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/htspconsultation

Six arrested in raids after cash robberies

SIX people have been arrested in a series of co-ordinated raids as a result of a number of cash in transit robberies, including one at Natwest in Cowley back in April.

The arrests were made on December 17, as officers carried out warrants at 16 address in Oxford, Lambeth, Croydon, Hillingdon and Uxbridge.

Those arrested are suspected of being members of a gang who planned and committed at least seven cash in transit robberies, including the one on Cowley.

All of the robberies in question

took place between October 2012 and November 2013, on security vans in Oxford, Tulse Hill, Hayes and Pinner.

They are also suspected of carrying out a robbery at Lloyds Bank in Stokenchurch on December 9.

Five men and one woman, all in their thirties, were arrested, and are in custody at a west London police station. A quantity of cash has also been recovered.

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or on 01235 516931

Man robs bus driver at gunpoint in Rose Hill

POLICE are searching for a man in his twenties who boarded a bus in Rose Hill and pointed a hand gun at the driver, before taking £170.

It took place on December 16 when the offender boarded the green Stagecoach double-decker bus while it was parked at The Oval at around 6.30pm.

The offender pointed a dark-coloured hand gun at the driver

and demanded the money. The victim, 25, was not injured during the incident.

Police are looking for a man of mixed race, about 25-years-old, approximately 5ft 9ins and of medium build.

He was wearing a large grey puffed jacket with the hood up and tightened around his face.

Detective constable Charles Ellis, investigating officer, said:

"We would like to reassure people that this kind of crime is very rare in Oxford."

"We would urge anyone who was in the area at the time and may have seen something to please contact us."

Anyone with information is asked to contact Det Con Ellis from Oxford police station on 101, or alternatively call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

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Christmas job security bonus for MINI staff

HUNDREDS of agency workers at MINI Plant Oxford are set for a more comfortable Christmas after being guaranteed job security beyond 2020.

A deal between BMW and Unite has seen a significant proportion of agency workers at the factory in Cowley become full-time.

The futures of thousands of agency workers across BMW sites in the UK have also been secured at Swindon Pressing, and Hams Hall.

By Jack Johnson

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Seven hundred of these workers were told before Christmas that they were to be made permanent with another 300 expected to hear the good news in the New Year.

Oxford East MP Andrew Smith was delighted to hear the news. "This welcome BMW announcement is great news for Cowley

and the whole community, and a credit to the Unite union who have been pressing for many more agency workers to be given permanent contracts," Mr Smith said.

"It will be great this Christmas for many long-standing agency workers to know they now have the prospect of a permanent contract."

The deal guarantees workers job security beyond 2020 and they will join the company's car

scheme, receive paid holidays, sick pay and will be eligible to join the company pension scheme.

Unite and BMW have also agreed to an annual review of the scheme in order to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Roger Maddison, Unite national secretary, said: "In an uncertain world the best Christmas present for working families is job security."

"We are delighted that 1,000 BMW agency workers are to be

made permanent with guaranteed job security beyond 2020.

"It is a prime example of unions and employers working together to make a lasting and positive impact in the workplace."

"The deal is also an indication of the strength of the car industry and the skills of the UK workforce."

Neither Unite or BMW could confirm how many agency workers had been made full-time at the Cowley plant.

News Bites

Man wanted

A MAN is being sought by police after a burglary in Kidlington, when he attempted to gain entry to a house in Church Street by smashing the bottom pane of glass on the rear door on December 10.

The offender is white, between 45 and 50-years old and around 5ft 9ins tall with greying hair. He fled the scene when he was disturbed by the homeowner at around 3.15pm.

PC Bryn Smith said: "The time of this offence consisted with the end of the school day so there would have been parents and children passing the house."

Call 101 with information.

Tesco gives groups a helping hand



• Representatives from the three organisations are presented with cheques outside the Faringdon branch of Tesco

THREE Faringdon community groups have each received a £500 donation from the town's branch of Tesco, following the store's recent 'Helping Hand' competition.

Faringdon's Rugby Club, Netball Club and Day Centre were chosen to receive the donation, after customers were asked to

nominate worthwhile organisations.

Tesco store manager Carl Petersson said: "We were delighted and overwhelmed with the response to our Helping Hand competition."

"After reading all of the nominations, my team and I selected the three organisations to each

receive a share of the £1,500 on offer.

"We are delighted our customers have really got behind this competition and from the nominations it's clear that the rugby club, netball club and day centre all deserve the donation."

"We hope it will make a real difference to the groups."

Rachael Kenyon, president of Faringdon Rugby Club, said: "We are extremely grateful for this donation from Tesco."

"Having recently moved to our new ground at Folly Park, we will be able to put the money towards buying a new set of posts, enabling more children and adults of the community to play rugby."

A different kind of festive donation...

ACCORDING to figures from the NHS, 67 people in the county are waiting for a transplant while 21 residents have died in the last five years due to the shortage of organs.

The stats relate to figures released on December 9 and NHS Blood and Transport wish to highlight them to encourage more people to become donors.

An NHS survey showed that only one in 20 people in England and Wales spending time with

family at Christmas will be discussing organ donation.

Anthony Clarkson, acting director of Organ Donation and Transplantation at NHS Blood and Transplant, said: "Don't miss the opportunity to discuss organ donation when you're with your family this Christmas."

"For people in need of an organ, Christmas is a very difficult time so we are urging everybody to talk about organ donation." Visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk

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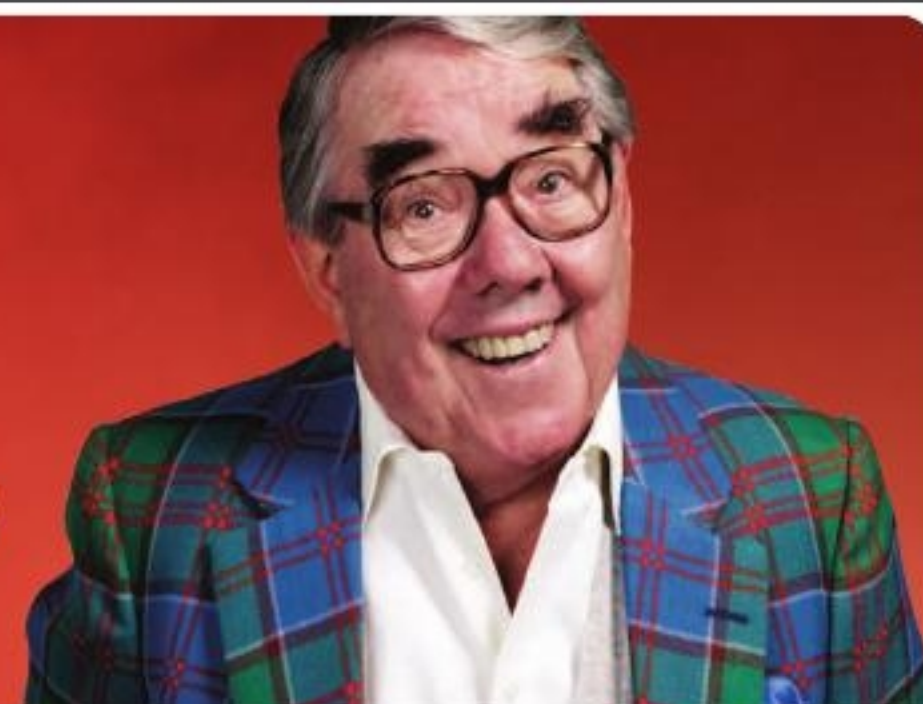
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Community ambassador initiative

OXFORDSHIRE Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) has launched a new county-wide initiative for people to become Community Ambassadors.

The Oxford-based organisation is looking for volunteer Community Ambassadors who will have four key roles.

Ambassadors will support their local community, enable others to volunteer, make sure local groups have access to all OCVA services and build networks locally.

Hannah Fenton, volunteering project officer at OCVA, said: "The Community Ambassador will be an important and valued source of information and advice."

"From home or in a central location in their town, they will help individuals and organisations to access the expertise they need."

"This might be matching people with volunteering opportunities, finding funding sources and giving basic advice, or encouraging more collaboration locally."

The role is for six to eight hours per week and volunteers need to be able to offer a minimum of six months from March 2014.

For more information contact Hannah Fenton on 01865 251946.

Oxford all set to go wild at heart

By Jack Johnson

jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

A NEW two-year project on three wildlife sites in the city has been announced, bringing communities and people together to explore Oxford's green spaces.

The Wild Oxford project, led by the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) in partnership with the city council.

Wild Oxford will focus on three wildlife sites in the city - Lye Valley in Headington, Rivermead Nature Park in Rose Hill and Chilswell Valley in South Hinksey.

Andy Gunn, the Wild Oxford project manager, said: "During the next two years we will be running events across the city to inspire people of all ages to explore and discover the wild green spaces in Oxford."

"We will be running workshops for people of all abilities so that people can learn traditional conservation skills including coppicing, hedgelaying and scything."

Lye Valley is tucked away behind the Churchill Hospital



• Andy Gunn at Rivermead Nature Park in Rose Hill

and is said to contain more than 300 plant species including 20 on the rare plants of Oxfordshire register.

Rivermead Nature Park lies within the busy housing estates at Rose Hill and the Wild Oxford project will work with people to revive the site to take forward practical conservation work.

At Chilswell Valley in South Hinksey, the plan is to clear scrub and renew interpretation signs and boardwalks put up

more than 20 years ago.

Neil Clennell, head of conservation & education for Oxfordshire, said: "This is a fascinating opportunity to bring the people of Oxford closer to the unique and historic biodiversity of our city."

"I am delighted that the Wildlife Trust will be working with Oxford City Council and other partners, such as residents' groups and the Natural History Museum, to make this exciting

project come alive."

Councillor Mark Lygo, Oxford City Council board member for Sport, Parks and Events, added: "This is an exciting project and I hope that our communities get involved."

The Wild Oxford project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund through a grant of £54,800, as well as a grant of £7,100 from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment with funds from Grondon Waste Management.

News Bites

Arts grant

OXFORD City Council has received a grant of £129,000 from Arts Council England to support Dancin' Oxford for the next three years.

Claire Thompson, Dancin' Oxford festival director, said: "Not only does it endorse the festival, and guarantee the future of it over the next three years, but it will also allow for some exciting new developments and partnerships to emerge."

Dancin' Oxford's 2014 Spring Festival takes place from February 28 to March 10.

Lit festival

IN an attempt to open up new avenues for debate and discussion around literature, culture and current affairs, the Oxford Literary Festival has announced the FT Weekend as its new headline partner.

Now in its 18th year, the 2014 festival takes place from March 22 - 30 and features an array of award-winning, internationally renowned authors.

In the past, the festival has seen famous names, such as Seamus Heaney, Philip Pullman and Ken Hom, discussing a wide range of topics from literature and politics, to history, science, art and food.

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Sex assault

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a woman was sexually assaulted in Didcot on December 10.

At about 8.15pm, a 20-year-old female was walking along Abbot Road, when she noticed a group of men standing by a small hatch-back car.

She was approached by one of the men who touched her inappropriately.

The victim ran to a place of safety and reported the matter to the police while the offender, who is white, with a muscular build, ran off towards Mereland Road.

Anyone who witnessed the incident should contact Det Con Georgina Bradley on 101.

Charity gig

TICKETS are now on sale for January's traditional South Oxfordshire District Council Chairman's Charity Gig.

Jazz singer Rebecca Poole will take to the stage at Didcot Cornerstone on January 18 at 8pm with all profits from the evening going to Cllr Dorothy Brown's chosen charities which are The Chilterns Multiple Sclerosis Centre and The Oxford Heart Centre's Heartfelt Appeal.

Tickets are £14.50.

Female inmates 'much more likely to self-harm'

A STUDY by researchers at the University of Oxford has found that female prisoners are four times more likely to self-harm than men.

Dr Seena Fazel and Professor Keith Hawton examined the prevalence of self-harm in all prisoners in England and Wales between 2004 and 2009, noting 140,000 self-harm incidents involving 26,500 inmates.

The study found that 20 to 24 per cent of female prisoners self-harmed, compared to around five and six per cent of male inmates.

"Repetition rates were striking," said Dr Fazel. "If a female prisoner self-harmed, she would [be likely to] self-harm eight times per year."

"There were 102 women and two male inmates who self-harmed more than 100 times per year."

"While self-harm is a substantial problem across the board, it is a particularly serious issue for women in prison who make up only five per cent of the prison population but account for half of all self-harm incidents."

"Moreover, now we know the extent to which the risk of subsequent suicide in prisoners

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

who self-harm is greater than the general prison population suicide prevention initiatives should be changed to include a focus on prisoners who are self-harming."

The researchers found several factors that increased risk of self-harm - being under 20, being white, being unsentenced or having a life sentence.

Cutting and scratching were the most common methods of self-harm in both sexes, followed by poisoning, overdose or swallowing objects for men and self-strangulation for women.

Self-harm was also found to be a strong risk factor for suicide in prison, particularly among men.

Suicide rates among men in prison who self-harmed was 334 per 100,000, around four times that of the general male prison population at 79 per 100,000.

The study was funded by the Wellcome Trust, the National Institute for Health Research, the National Offender Management Service and the Department of Health.

Nursery open again after £100k boost



• (From left) Helen Wiseman, Mike Abbott, Pioneer Ela, Ben Reid and Patrick Gray at the opening of the nursery

A CARTERTON nursery has reopened following a £100,000 investment, meaning it now has brand new facilities and additional places for pre-school children.

The Co-operative Childcare nursery in West Oxfordshire Business Park has been completely refurbished, and is now able to care for 74 people between the ages of three months and five years old.

Improvements include a new kitchen section for the children to get involved with cookery sessions, and a revamped garden area so they can spend more time outside.

A staff training suite has been created, to support colleague learning and development.

It was officially opened by the mayor of Carterton Cllr Lynne Little, and parents and children were invited to take a tour

of the new facilities.

Nursery manager Danielle Taylor said: "This investment has allowed us to significantly improve the services we offer to our children. The upgraded facilities mean that we can now provide a more individual learning experience for each child in our care, from their earliest years right through to school age, in supportive and encouraging surroundings."

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Hunt on after Faringdon chemical spill

FIRE crews had to be called to a Faringdon church car park on December 14, following a chemical spill outside the building between 8pm and 11pm.

Approximately 25 litres of hydrochloric acid had been spilled from a container onto the car park, attended by fire appliances and specialists support vehicles from Faringdon and Oxford.

They were also joined by a hazardous materials advisor, and the container and spill were quickly cleared up.

Incident commander and station manager Mike Adcock said: "The quick action of members of the public in calling the Fire and Rescue Service enabled us to arrive promptly and effectively deal with the spill."

"Should members of public come across containers or drums with chemicals in, then the best course of action is to leave the chemical and seek further advice."

Police are now searching for a male offender in connection to the incident, who was wearing a grey hooded top at the time.

They are also investigating damage done to a gate at the car park, caused by a grinder, and reports that a white van with blue sign writing on the front left the car park around the time of the incident.

Contact PC Robert Maris on 101.

Airman is flying high after award

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

A LEADING aircraftman from RAF Benson has been crowned the winner of the new Junior Leader Development Awards.

LAC Matthew Salt, a reservist intelligence analyst representing the Operations Wing won the coveted trophy, as well as £250 of Amazon vouchers.

Each wing and squadron at RAF Benson put forward one candidate for the competition, who were required to create a 10 minute presentation on a topic of their choice to a four-person judging panel.

One of the judges on the panel was RAF Benson's station commander, group captain Nigel Colman, who was pleased with how the competition went.

He said: "These are really exciting awards and a great new initiative at RAF Benson to recognise potential and promote talent across our junior non-commissioned ranks."

"It is never easy standing in front of your peers and superiors to present on a topic, particularly those that are so well-known in the Royal Air Force such as 'air



• Matthew Salt (front centre) along with other nominees for the Junior Leader Development Awards

power' and 'leadership'. However, the presentations were professional, engaging, confident and thought-provoking, highlighting the high quality of junior personnel we have here at RAF Benson and making the judging very difficult."

The awards were sponsored by PriDE, whose head of business planning Richard Thornley said: "We are delighted to have

sponsored this awards presentation."

"The career development opportunities provided by these types of events are excellent and I was very impressed by the confidence and ability shown by all the presenters."

"It is really challenging to cover such in-depth topics so well in such a short space of time."

Second place in the awards went to senior aircraftman Ashley Woodruff, while third went to senior aircraftman Richard Greasley.

The other nominees included senior aircraftman Robert Lindsay, senior aircraftman (technician) Matthew Zinn, acting corporal Samuel Wheeler and senior aircraftman (technician) Paul Derrick.

News Bites

Police appeal

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a handbag was stolen from an occupied house in Davenport Road, Witney, on December 15.

Between 10am and 3pm, offenders opened an unlocked front door and stole the handbag from the hallway, while the occupants were inside the house.

PC Lorna Briggs said: "I would also like to remind residents to make sure their property is secure, both when they go out and when they are at home."

Call 101 with information.

Re-burial

HUNDREDS of skeletal remains were re-buried at Wallingford cemetery on December 18, a decade after they were first found.

Two-hundred-and-eleven of the town's earliest residents were excavated between 2003-04 on what is now the old Waitrose site.

The earliest burials date to the 10th century, soon after the town was founded by King Alfred and the latest to the 14th century.

They were buried in the churchyard of St Martin's - a Saxon church which fell out of use in the 14th century.

Oxfordshire
Guardian



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Work starts on special school

WORK to build a new special school in Oxford has begun, with the aim of ensuring more young people with learning difficulties can be educated closer to home.

Building work began yesterday on the long-awaited MacIntyre Academy, which will focus on the needs of

By Adam Flinn
adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

25 autistic children aged 11 to 19

It is due to open in Autumn 2014 and will be run by MacIntyre Academies, with funding being provided by Oxfordshire

County Council.

Cllr Melinda Tilley, cabinet member for children, education and families, said: "No child, regardless of their disabilities, should be denied an excellent education that is close to home."

"The new academy will transform the educational experience of some of the county's most vulnerable children, and help bring about the best possible outcomes for them."

"Parents have told me that this type of residential special school in Oxfordshire is long overdue."

Brenda Mullen, chief executive of MacIntyre Academies, said: "The establishment of this academy in Oxford builds on MacIntyre's expertise in the field of special education."

"Our ambition is to continually challenge ourselves to provide the best educational provision for children and young people with autism and learning difficulties."

Janet Johnson, special educational needs manager at the council, added: "We are delighted that MacIntyre Academies will be running the new academy."

"Over recent years

MacIntyre has significantly improved the lives of some of the most disabled young people in Oxfordshire."

A ceremony was held yesterday to mark the start of building work, which was attended by representatives from the county council and MacIntyre Academies.

It also marked the start of a £250,000 fundraising appeal by MacIntyre to provide specialist equipment and facilities, to enhance the educational experience of young people.

Do you have an Oxford story?

Contact James
jamesb@taylornewspapers.co.uk
or on 01235 516931

News Bites

Jewels stolen

GOLD jewellery was stolen from a Moulsoford property on December 12, and police are appealing for witnesses who may have seen the incident.

Between 12.50pm and 1.10pm, offenders gained entry to the property on The Street by smashing a pane of glass in the front door, before taking various items of jewellery.

Anyone with information is asked to contact PC Katie Ford at Didcot CID on 101.

Investigation

POLICE are investigating a burglary in Halifax Road, Bicester, after 40 euros was taken from a property on December 15.

The incident took place between 5pm and 8pm, when offenders gained access by using a tool to force open the front door.

Contact PC Stephen Perry at Banbury police station on 101 with any information.

Drug charge

A 49-YEAR-OLD man has pleaded guilty to three drugs offences in Bicester at a hearing at Banbury Magistrates' Court on December 11.

Floyd McKoy, of Cemetery Road, London, was arrested on December 10 and charged with one count of possession of a class A drug with intent to supply, one count relating to a class B drug, and one count of being concerned in the supply of class A drugs.

He will appear at Oxford Crown Court on January 7 for sentencing.



• Brenda Mullen and Cllr Ian Hudspeth

Councillor's Column

Cllr Bob Price

Leader of Oxford City Council



The squeeze on living is very real

THE Joseph Rowntree Foundation have just published a report on poverty in Britain, showing that more than half of the families who are living on incomes below the official poverty level are actually in work. In other words, they can only find jobs that are very low paid, or part-time (or both).

Their jobs are often very insecure and then they find themselves out of work for periods between jobs. The slight upturn in the economy is improving the position of those at the top of the income ladder, but for those at the bottom, improved pay and prospects remain a mirage. Food banks have become one of the new growth industries in Poverty Britain, with many users having to use these banks for basic supplies and not just for top ups in emergencies.

The squeeze on living standards and the real value of what our incomes can buy was confirmed

last week by Britain's leading experts on tax and spending, the Institute of Fiscal Studies. They pointed out that living standards would be lower in 2015 than they were in 2010 when the Coalition government took office. Thanks to the Coalition's failure to generate growth, the output of the economy is still below the level that it reached before the banking crisis hit the western world.

And what does George Osborne have to offer? More cuts in spending on crucial community budgets - reductions of 2.3 per cent a year up to 2016, increasing to bigger cuts of 3.7 per cent a year up to 2019. Osborne is using the global recession and the banking crisis to permanently cut your services - school transport, youth centres, children's centres, libraries, theatres and homeless support - in order to give tax cuts to the better off.

The people of this country have accepted that there needs to be some spending reductions but they expect Government to combine these with an economic policy that delivers better living standards and decent community services. Instead, the Chancellor is planning for permanent austerity.

And at the same time as the Coalition cut your living standards, they have been throwing money recklessly after their pet Universal Credit project - £41 million wasted because of mistakes, and £91 million just written off. The project is way behind timetable and won't even be completed by 2017. And the system can't even deal with the common situations where people change jobs, earn different amounts per week or couples split up. Incompetent and heartless - these sum up the Coalition at Christmas 2013.

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News Bites

Restoration

ABINGDON & Witney College students are restoring the heathland at Shotover Hill Country Park.

Level 3 Countryside Management and Arboriculture Course students hope that by clearing the silver birch and derelict gorse the heather will be encouraged to re-sow and bring back with it a variety of insects, and rare butterflies.

The City Council is supporting the students by providing signage to set out in the area while work is in progress.

House burgled

POLICE are investigating a burglary in Botley, after a number of electrical items were taken from a property in Pinnocks Way.

The incident took place between 12.30pm and 11.15pm on December 15, when offenders gained entry to the house through a rear window.

Woman bailed

A 41-YEAR-OLD woman has been charged following a burglary of a house in Godstow Road, Wolvercote, on December 4.

The woman was charged with one count of burglary, after she allegedly stole a purse. She has been bailed until January 3.

Drivers - stay safe in bad conditions

By Jack Johnson

jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

ROAD safety experts are sending out a clear message this winter - drive to the weather conditions.

This is in order to help prevent road accidents in hazardous weather.

Icy and wet roads can be hazardous to road users while stopping distances more than double on wet roads as tyre-grip is lost.

In addition, stopping distances are ten times more on an icy road than on a dry one.

Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service's Road Safety manager Mick Clarke said: "Reduced visibility and potentially slippery road surfaces can make winter driving particularly hazardous."

"It is very important that drivers adjust to the driving conditions, whether it is snowing, foggy, icy or wet or a combination of those conditions, so they have enough time to react."

Mr Clarke was also keen to issue advice on how to avoid hazardous conditions.



• Experts are warning drivers of hazardous road conditions similar to that of last year's floods

"Fog lamps should be used if visibility is fewer than 100 metres and sunglasses could also be worn to help counter the glare of winter sunlight," he added.

"It is also important that drivers have prepared their vehicles to be road-safe before they set off."

"Making sure tyres are at the

right pressure and ensuring ice is completely cleared from windows and mirrors can help prevent a road accident.

"It is also essential that windows are completely de-misted before a journey starts, so the driver has a clear all-round view of what is going on."

Experts also recommend that motorists keep an ice-scraper,

de-icer, a torch, first aid kit and a hazard warning triangle in their vehicles.

Further safety advice is being issued as part of the county council's Ready for Winter campaign and can also be found via 365alive, an initiative designed to reduce incidents through educational and preventative work.

Honoured for community integration

FOUR organisations have been rewarded with Community Integration Awards that will help promote effective opportunities for people across various backgrounds.

Cowley Road Works, Nepalese Community Oxfordshire, Slade and Headington Children's Centre and Green Square Group were rewarded by the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire Prof Graham Upton.

The organisations have been awarded £8,000 and additional mentoring on how they can provide opportunities for more effective and positive relationships across various communities.

Twenty-eight organisations applied for the awards and Prof Upton said: "It was incredibly inspiring to see so many great organisations trying to create change, but a little disconcerting at the same time knowing we could not help all of them and the strength of the applications made choosing the winners extraordinarily hard."

"Oxfordshire is a county of juxtapositions, it has great beauty in its historical architecture but that can mask a lot of different sides of life and discrepancies."

"Oxford is a city of great wealth and education but also has pockets of huge deprivation which has massive implications on health, crime, housing and education."

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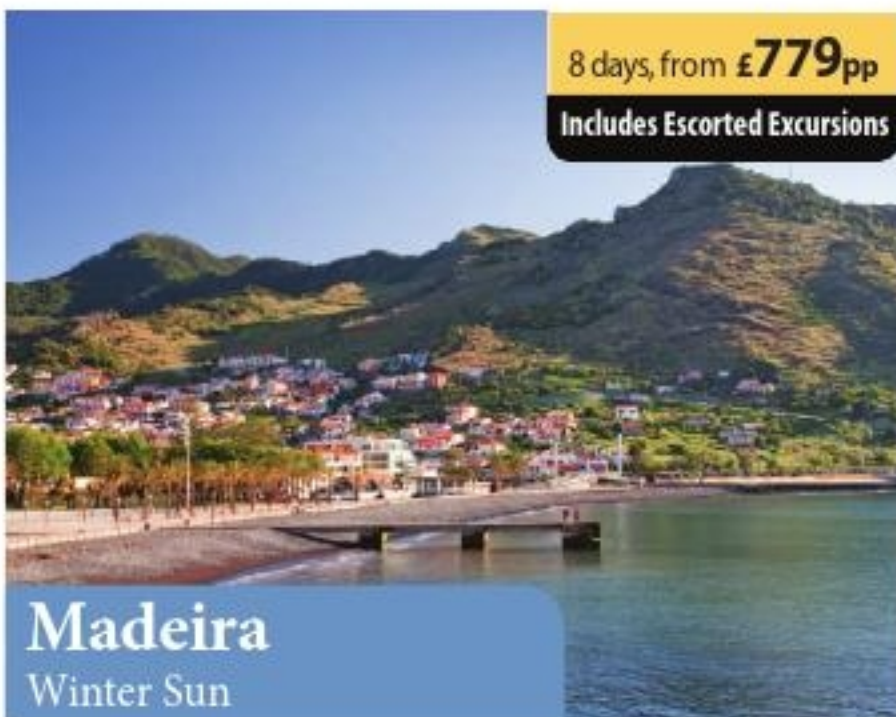
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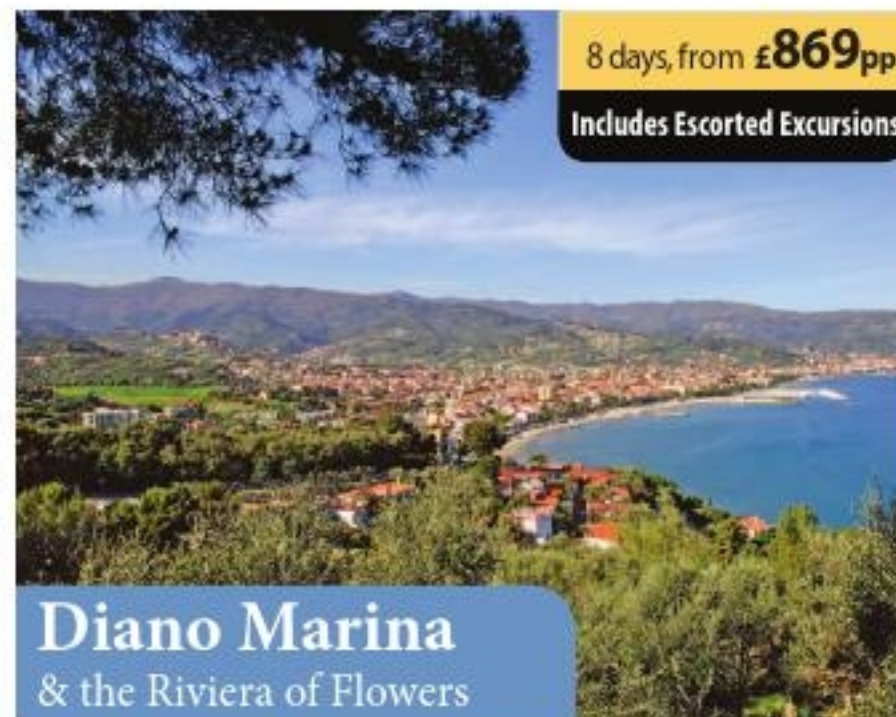
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The idyllic islands

Tuesday departures, 6, 20 & 27 May and 7 October 2014
From Luton airport

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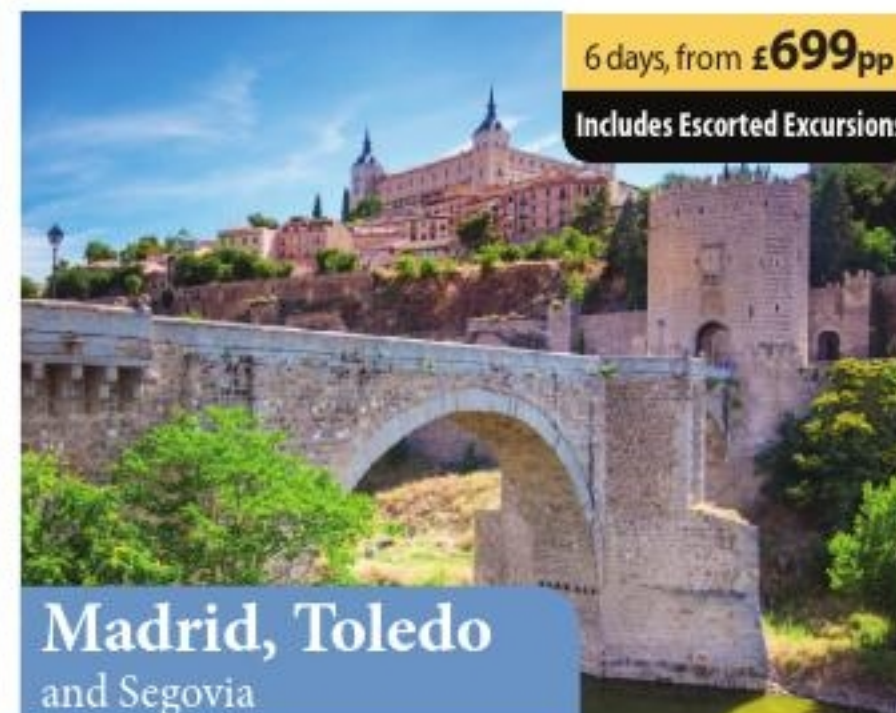
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A plethora of talent at the O2

OXFORD'S O2 Academy has announced its new shows coming up in the first months of 2014, featuring a number of mainstream and indie acts performing live on the stage.

January sees Los Angeles-based four-piece Warpaint come to Oxford, days after launching their eponymous second album and follow-up to debut record 'The Fool', released in 2010.

Max Raptor return to the county after their appearance at this year's Truck festival, and released their first full album



• Ben Welburn as Johnny Cash is in Oxford on February 13

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

'Mother's Ruin' back in September.

The music of Johnny Cash is performed at the O2 on February 13, with tribute act CASH and frontman Ben Welburn bringing a range of the man in black's hits to a new audience.

Bristol-born 18-year-old singer Lauren Aquilina is conducting her biggest UK tour to date in February, and comes to Oxford in support of her second EP 'Sinners'.

Foxes, also known as Loui Rose Allen, comes to the O2 ahead of the release of her debut album in March, and is already believed to be a serious contender for the BRITs Critics' Choice Award next year.

New York indie band We Are Scientists, made up of Keith Murray, Chris Cain and Andy Burrows, are back in the UK for a full tour in March, performing hits from past albums and upcoming EP 'Business Casual'.

Maximo Park are back on tour with the release of their



• Maximo Park come to the O2 on March 18

fifth studio album 'Too Much Information' next year, playing songs from the latest release as well as their extensive back catalogue.

Singer-songwriter Katy B is in Oxford on March 27, following on from first album 'On a Mission' with new release 'Little Red', featuring the single 'Crying For No Reason'.

A full list of all the O2 Academy's shows, along with ticket prices, can be found at www.o2academyoxford.co.uk or by calling 0844 477 2000.



• Foxes performs from her debut album on February 28 (Picture by Luka McGhie)

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FROSTS
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Turning a corner for 2014...

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

DIDCOT Cornerstone has announced its new shows for the start of 2014, with a range of nationally known names and local acts to entertain audiences up to the spring.

Theatrical comedy *Eric and Little Ern* arrives in Didcot in January, featuring experienced stage actors Ian Ashpitel and Jonty Stephens, who capture the spirit of Morecambe and Wise themselves.

February begins with a performance of Shakespeare's classic play *The Comedy of Errors*, also regarded as one of the most farcical, telling the story of two sets of identical twins separated at birth.

Suitcase Stories, a children's production about a suitcase and its tales from journeys across the world, is at the Cornerstone on February 2.

The Reduced Shakespeare Company return to Didcot with a new show, performing the entirety of *The Bible* using just three actors in this comedic production.



• Iranian comic Omid Djalili performs his two shows on February 19 and 20

Irish contemporary folk musician Cara Dillon takes to the stage with the impending release of her fifth studio album, with support from Ellie Williams.

Stand-up comedian Omid

Djalili is back on tour following a sell-out season at this year's Edinburgh Festival, performing at the Cornerstone for two nights in February.

Audiences are invited to spend an afternoon with Sunny



• The Reduced Shakespeare Company are back at the Cornerstone on February 8

Ormonde, best known as Lilian from *The Archers*, as she speaks about her 12 years on the *Radio Four* show.

Children's rock group *Kid Carpet* and *The Noisy Animals* blast off into space on March 2, where

a gorilla, a bear, a hedgehog and a badger play games and rock out at a grand dance contest.

Comedienne Lucy Porter comes to Didcot on March 7, who is known for her appearances on *Have I Got News For*

You, Mock the Week and *The Weakest Link*.

All of the Cornerstone's shows, along with ticket prices and start times, can be found on www.cornerstone-arts.org or by calling 01235 515144.

5-11 Woodstock Road
 Oxford OX2 6HA
 Tel: 01865 511995

BROWNS

New Year's Eve

three courses for £40

Starters

Oyster Mushroom Velouté (v) white truffle oil, crème fraîche and crusty bread

Roasted Goat's Cheese (v) walnut crust, pico de gallo salsa, golden beetroot and a sweet pomegranate molasses vinaigrette

Gravadlax of Salmon poached free range egg, asparagus & chervil hollandaise served with granary bread & butter

Carpaccio of Seared Tuna sashimi-grade tuna, rolled in dijon mustard, herbs & soy, served with ginger, sesame, mouli and carrot slaw

Ham Hock & Pea Terrine celeriac & apple remoulade, balsamic vinaigrette, rhubarb & tomato chutney with cinnamon brioche

Rannoch Smoked Breast of Duck celeriac & apple remoulade and a chilli & pequinillo pepper dressing

Pan Seared Scallops with a mild curry dusting, cauliflower purée, tempura florets and a grape, garlic and shallot vinaigrette (+ supplement £1.50)

Mains

Roast Corn-Fed Chicken gremolata marinated, served with roasted carrots & red onion, spinach, red wine & herb jus, crisped pancetta and an arrabiata crusted rosti potato

Shoulder of Lamb with bubble & squeak, honey roast carrots, spinach and a red wine jus and mint jelly

Braised Pig Cheeks with an apple brandy jus, green & broad beans and a caramelised apple mashed potato

Roast Breast of Duck with pomegranate molasses & red wine sauce, sautéed potatoes, provençal vegetables, broad beans, spinach, black olives and baby onions

Fresh Fillet of Cod with a brown shrimp, caper & parsley butter served with spinach and sautéed potatoes

Chestnut, Cranberry & Brie Wellington (v) served with a selection of seasonal vegetables

Fillet of Beef chargrilled steak topped with creamy exotic mushrooms served with horseradish infused crushed baby potatoes and a black olive, truffle oil and red wine sauce (+ supplement £2.50)

Puddings

Browns Winter Eton Mess roasted plums, cinnamon, orange soaked cranberries and chestnuts

Black Forest Trifle steeped in cherry brandy

Lemon Tart topped with toasted pine nuts, served with passion fruit coulis

Salted Caramel Cheesecake with an orange & cranberry crème fraîche

Crème Brûlée with a plum compote

Fresh Fruit Salad with honey cress, lime & chilli syrup and frozen yoghurt

Selection of British Cheese (£5 as an additional course)

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Friday 27th - 10.00am - 4.00pm, Saturday 28th - 9.00am - 5.00pm,
Sunday 29th - 10.00am - 4.00pm, Monday 30th - 10.00am - 4.00pm,
New Years Day - CLOSED, Thursday 2nd January - 9.00am - 5.30pm

Entertainment

To advertise in this section please call
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email the details to
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10 - 24 December 2013
Comerstone, Didcot

A NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS
for children aged 3 and up. Based on the much loved traditional poem, the production includes Eddie the mouse who is wondering why only humans get presents. This brave little chap sets off on an adventure of a lifetime to find Father Christmas. Along the way he dodges the family cat, gets directions from a robot, befriends a beautiful fairy on top of the tree.
www.comerstone-arts.org

12 - 31 December 2013
Burton Taylor Studio

FATHER CHRISTMAS AND THE ICICLE BICYCLE
Young children and their families will experience stories, festive songs and decoration making, whilst getting the exciting opportunity to meet Father Christmas and his team in this interactive adventure written and directed by Helen Eastman.
www.oxfordplayhouse.com

19 December
Comerstone, Didcot
4 GIRLS 4 HARPS

A range of beautiful pieces in the soft glow of candlelight. Relax and be carried away by their magical sound, and even join in singing with some of your favourite carols.
www.comerstone-arts.org

20 December
Comerstone, Didcot
NORMA WATERSON AND ELIZA CARTHAY
perform with their 6 piece band. Two of the country's most finest exponents of traditional song, they will perform traditional classics and some unexpected gems.
www.comerstone-arts.org

21 December, 2pm
Wantage Civic Hall
ALADDIN PANTOMIME
Boo and hiss along with this fabulous pantomime especially for all little (and not-so-little)

Genie-uses in this spectacular journey across time and space to visit the magical city of Old Peking. Packed with comedy, excitement and adventure, the children will love to cheer their hero Aladdin and boo the evil Abanazar. The shows lasts approximately two hours.

Tickets £8.50 per person or £30 for a party of four.
www.wantagecivichall.co.uk 01235 515144

22 December
Comerstone, Didcot
CHRIS NEWMAN AND MAIRE NI CHATHASAIGH
breathtaking blend of traditional Irish music, swing jazz and blue grass, alongside festive favourites.
www.comerstone-arts.org

27 - 30 December 2013
Waterperry Gardens, Nr Wheatley
CHRISTMAS WEEK AT WATERPERRY GARDENS
Experience Waterperry Gardens as it has never been seen before as the estate opens during the festive period.
www.waterperrygardens.co.uk 01844 339226

30 December, 8.30pm
The Lamb, Mill St, Wantage
DAVE MOORWOOD'S RASCALS OF RHYTHM
'Betwixmas Jazz' an evening of lost gems from the song writers of the 20s & 30s presented in the Rascal's unique and swinging jazz style - no guests - just 5 of Oxfordshire's best jazz musicians
if you wish to eat to book a table or just drop in for a glass of something.

8 - 11 January 2014
Oxford Playhouse
FIJI LAND

Fiji Land is a surreal and incisive look at what happens when cell doors shut and the world looks away, directed by Oxford Playhouse/MCS Resident Director Alice Malin.
www.oxfordplayhouse.com

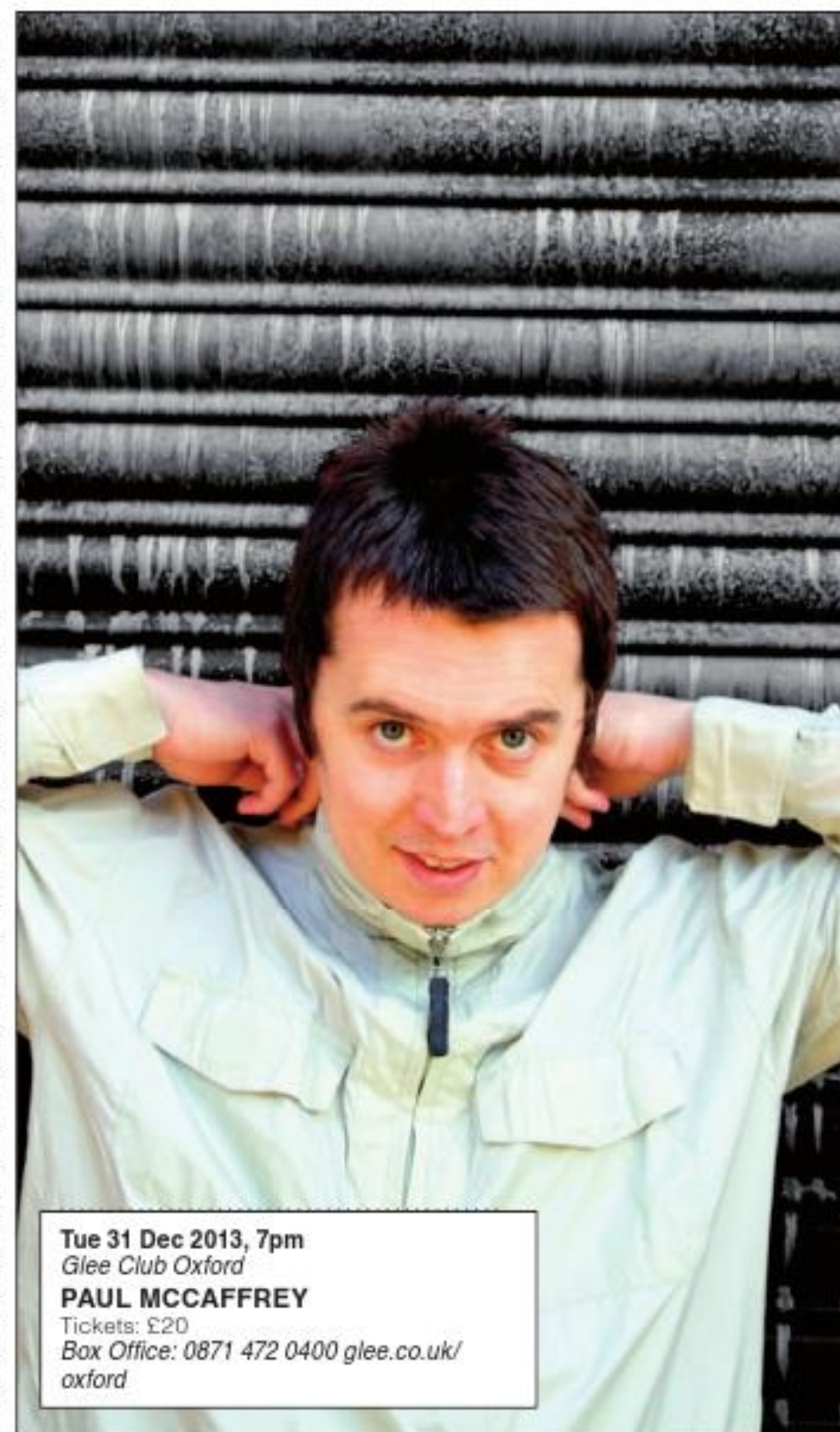
10 January, 8pm
Wallingford Town Hall
TWHAS WILL BE BY LIZ WOOLLEY

This talk looks at how the lives of Oxfordshire children, both those born in the county and those evacuated here, were affected by World War II. Oxfordshire escaped major bombing during World War II but the counties inhabitants were, none-the-less, heavily affected by the War. Visitors (£3) are most welcome.
www.twhas.org.uk

11 January, 10am - 12pm
University Parks, Oxford, OX1 3PL
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12 January, 3pm
Henley Town Hall
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www.henleyorgantrust.org.uk

18 January, 8pm - 10pm
Jacqueline du Privé Music Building
NICK VAN BLOSS (PIANO)
www.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk/jdp 01865 286660



Tue 31 Dec 2013, 7pm
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PAUL MCCAFFREY
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Sudoku

Place a number from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each 3x3 block, column, and full row includes each of the numbers from 1 to 9 only once. **EASY/MEDIUM/HARD**

		4	5			8	2	
	2		9	3		4		5
1	7		8					
		3			8		6	4
7			2		6			9
4	8		7			1		
					9		3	6
3		2		1	5		7	
	6	9			2	5		

			1	9				3
	1	7	5			8		
	3	8				9		
					5		8	
8	7						4	9
	2		9					
		9				1	5	
		2			9	4	7	
6				1	3			

6				1				4
9	4				8	1		
		7				2		3
		7	4	5				
					4	3	8	
7		2				9		
		8	2				1	7
3				5				6

Two speed crossword

Quick Clues Across

- 1 Representing something abstract (8)
- 4 Mimics (4)
- 8 Sudden invasion (6)
- 10 Tropical fruit (6)
- 11 Female monarch (5)
- 12 Musical show (5)
- 14 Not substantial (6)
- 17 Voted in again (9)
- 18 Disappearing (9)
- 22 Facial expressions (6)
- 23 Literary composition (5)
- 24 Move furtively (5)
- 26 Divides (6)
- 27 Linen fabric (6)
- 28 Satisfy fully (4)
- 29 Manipulators (8)

Quick Clues Down

- 1 Whirl (4)
- 2 Malicious killing (6)
- 3 Dull (6)
- 5 Calm (6)
- 6 Least big (8)
- 7 French Impressionist painter (5)
- 9 Contestants (9)
- 10 Position established by invaders (9)
- 13 Easily corrupted (5)
- 15 Guides for horses (5)
- 16 Continues to exist (8)
- 18 Fragrant plant (6)
- 19 Snug places (5)
- 20 Land mass surrounded by water (6)
- 21 Car shelter (6)
- 25 Glides on snow (4)

Cryptic Clues Across

- 1 Persons of rank who don't go skating? (8)
- 4 Retain part of 14 (4)
- 8 Everyone taken in by bad song (6)
- 10 Secure for salvage (6)
- 11 New diets are named we hear (5)
- 12 Sacks the ingrates (5)
- 14 Fortress in which to throw the French (6)
- 17 Possibly cast carp hence (9)
- 18 Shrinking from girl I once upset (9)
- 22 How the Count got framed (6)
- 23 Bury in the main terminus (5)
- 24 It's no secret when they are spilt (5)
- 26 Ned in trouble? Fastened on quite the opposite (6)
- 27 Egg and roe for dragonkiller (6)
- 28 We hear you will get it at Christmas (4)
- 29 At the seaside they go out regularly (3,5)

Cryptic Clues Down

- 1 Spheres of vision? (4)
- 2 Sounds like the Duke of Edinburgh's tonic (6)
- 3 Search wildly for what follows (6)
- 5 No longer a sight, we hear, to agitate (6)
- 6 No absence of gifts by the sound of it (8)
- 7 This litter could well be tidy (5)
- 9 Revealed Pluto was shut up (9)
- 10 Bringing to mind a change of name (9)
- 13 Upset the beer before a hundred get the instrument (5)
- 15 Being deficient can be taken in by holy man (5)
- 16 Clumsy and unlikely to make a profit (8)
- 18 A 'spoken' line? (6)
- 19 Squares can be so solid (5)
- 20 Possibly a fly little thing (6)
- 21 Agreed it could be equipped (6)
- 25 The best sort of wagers (4)

1		2		3					4	5		6
								7				
8					9			10				
					11							
	12		13					14		15		
16		17										
		18		19					20		21	
22								23				
					24							25
26								27				
28						29						

Scribble space

Last week's solutions

4	1	7	5	2	6	3	9	8
5	3	8	4	7	9	6	1	2
2	9	6	1	3	8	7	4	5
8	4	1	9	6	5	2	3	7
7	5	3	2	8	1	9	6	4
6	2	9	7	4	3	8	5	1
1	6	5	8	9	7	4	2	3
9	7	4	3	5	2	1	8	6
3	8	2	6	1	4	5	7	9

4	5	7	3	6	8	2	9	1
8	1	9	5	2	7	3	4	6
6	2	3	9	1	4	8	5	7
9	7	2	6	8	3	5	1	4
1	4	5	2	7	9	6	8	3
3	6	8	1	4	5	9	7	2
7	3	4	8	9	2	1	6	5
5	9	6	4	3	1	7	2	8
2	8	1	7	5	6	4	3	9

5	3	8	4	6	9	1	7	2
6	1	2	8	7	5	9	3	4
7	9	4	3	2	1	6	5	8
9	6	5	2	3	4	7	8	1
2	7	1	5	8	6	3	4	9
4	8	3	1	9	7	2	6	5
3	2	7	9	5	8	4	1	6
1	5	9	6	4	3	8	2	7
8	4	6	7	1	2	5	9	3

Quick Crossword

Across: 4 Across 8 Inflate 9 Toddler 10 Cover girl 11 Dial 13 Inane 14 Ascends 16 Setting 18 Idler 19 True 21 Semi-final 22 Antics 23 Endemic 24 Theory
Down: 1 Announcer 2 Alternate 3 Stage 5 Cool 6 Ordain 7 Spells 9 Trust 11 Deadlines 12 Adrenalin 15 Andes 16 Strait 17 Turtle 20 Diana 21 Scar

Cryptic Crossword

Across: 4 Coffin 8 Portion 9 Places 10 Stevedore 11 Sore 13 Tripe 14 Amperes 16 Couples 18 Peers 19 Erne 21 Tolerates 22 Saloon 23 Circles 24 Siding
Down: 1 Posterior 2 Stovepipe 3 Bonds 5 Ogle 6 Factor 7 Rushes 9 Prime 11 Severance 12 Retriever 15 Felon 16 Census 17 Undad 20 Refit 21 Town

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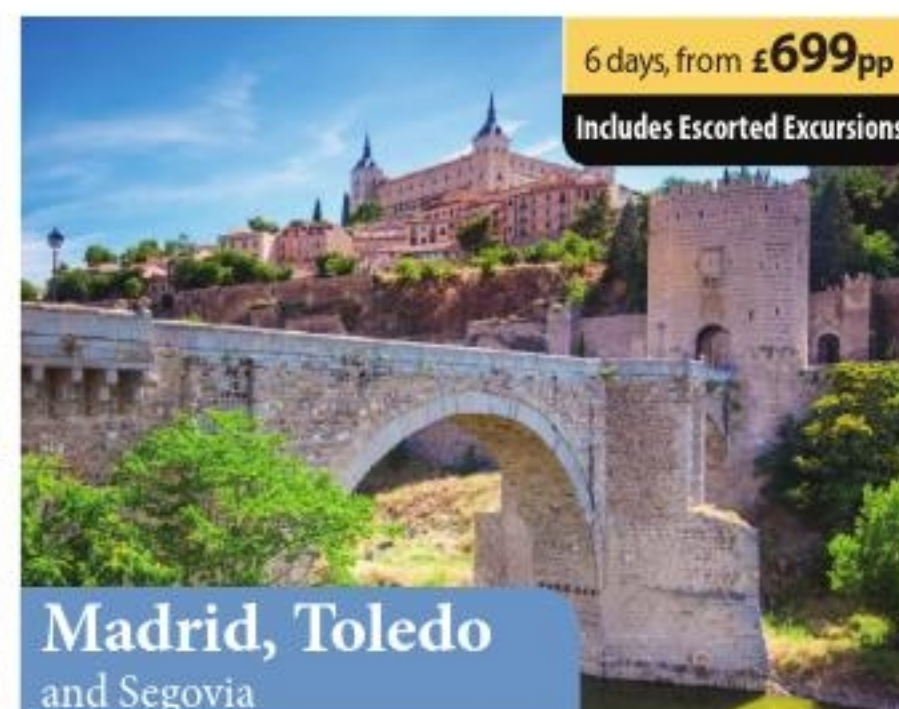
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AUTOWEEKLY

It's the saloon of choice

BMW'S 5-series needs little introduction. For decades it's been the saloon of choice for the keen driver and more recently the frugally-minded Fleet Manager.

Effectively replacing the Efficient Dynamics model, and offering improved efficiency, this latest 520d sits in the lower section of the range, but the M Sport option adds a sportier look, with bigger 18-inch wheels and stiffened suspension.

The headline news however, is the lower emissions and increased fuel efficiency: BMW claim 62.8 mpg and 117g/km for the cheaper SE-spec car. The bigger wheels on this M-Sport example bring economy down slightly to 57.6 mpg – the trade-off for sharper handling.

On the road the new 5-series certainly lives up to its reputation as a keen driving machine and immediately impresses with its fluid and balanced handling. The superb steering balance

REVIEW: BMW 5-series

By Philip Shoulder

@writeonmotoring

and feel embarrasses many rivals too. Ride refinement is now much improved – further helped with the optional Variable Damper Control, which ensures the 5-series composure is maintained, even on bumpy and rutted country roads.

Although precise enough, the six-speed manual box is less enjoyable to use, having a slightly notchy quality to its action, but many buyers will go for the eight-speed ZF automatic option – especially as it returns identical economy figures.

Although the usual four-cylinder diesel clatter seems incongruous with a large BMW, the 2.0 litre motor quiets down once under way and feels strong and punchy, if not outright rapid.

The cabin feels very upmarket – helped by the standard Black

Dakota leather – while the BMW Business Navigation system is also now included on all variants. The driving position is very good, as is the comfort and support of the seats. All models get electric adjustment for the seat height and backrest angle, but seat sliding fore and aft is done manually.

Although far from cramped, with plenty of room for four, interior space certainly isn't class-leading and comfort of a third rear passenger will be compromised by the chunky transmission tunnel. Boot space is good though, at 520 litres.

Verdict:

The latest incarnation of the BMW 5-series skillfully blends class-leading driving appeal, prestige and comfort with efficient and powerful engines, strong residual values and low running costs. Little wonder it was recently crowned 'best executive car' by Fleet World magazine earlier this year.



• The new BMW 5-series



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- 11 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC, 5dr, midnight sky met/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB radio & CD, PAS, Blue tooth, alloys, front fogs, heated windscreen, ABS, ESP, 29,000 miles **£10,395**
- 08 08 FOCUS 1.8 PETROL 125PS STYLE, 5dr, panther black/grey, c/l, r/CD, e/w&m, PAS, a/c, front fogs, 6 airbags, ESP, 2 owners from new, service history, 53,446 miles **£5,595**
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- 12 61 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL 125PS ZETEC ESTATE, colorado red/grey, e/w&m, c/l, DAB r/CD, alloys, a/c, ABS, ESP, HFS, front fogs, 6 airbags, Blue tooth USB, rear park sensors, 12 months manufacturers warranty, one owner from new, FSH, 17,900 miles **£11,995**
- 11 60 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL SPORT, 5dr, frozen white/grey titanium, sat nav, Bluetooth, USB, rear park sensors, a/c, alloys, HFS, auto wipers & headlamps, front fogs, e/front windows & mirrors, ABS, 6 airbags, one owner, FSH, 33,500 miles **£8,995**
- 10 10 FOCUS 1.6 PETROL TITANIUM, 5dr, chilli met/grey, 5 spd, e/w & m, a/c, HFS, auto h'lights & wipers, PAS, power start button, key less entry, DAB r/CD, rear park sensors, cruise, heated seats, 6 airbags, ABS, one owner, FSH, low mileage 23,758 **£8,995**
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- 11 11 C MAX 1.6 PETROL 125PS TITANIUM, micastone met/grey, 5 spd, e/w&m, c/l, r/CD, heated windscreen, PAS, auto lights & wipers, ABS, ESP, convenience pack includes park assist & folding mirrors, global closing, alloys, very low mileage 5,500 miles, one owner, FSH **£12,595**
- 13 13 B MAX ZETEC 1.0 ECOBOOST 125PS, 5 dr, midnight sky/grey, 5 spd, City pack, e/w&m, Ford Sync, power folding mirrors, rear park sensors, HFS, ABS, multiple airbags, alloys, ex-demonstrator, low mileage 5,400 miles, RFL £30 per year **£15,995**

KA

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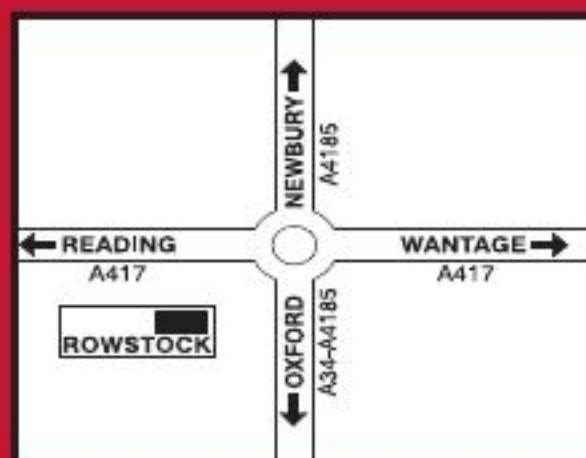
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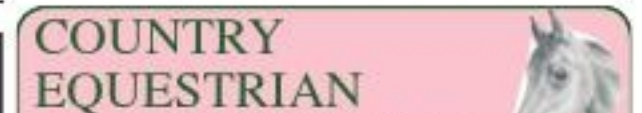
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Oxford aiming to keep up impressive campaign

IT'S been quite a start to the season for Oxford United.

At the time of going to print, United were top of League Two, into the third round of the FA Cup and on an eight-match unbeaten run in all competitions.

However, it has been far from easy.

At the beginning of December, manager Chris Wilder was allowed to speak to Portsmouth with regard to their vacant manager's position but fears over his exit were soon quashed when Richie Barker was appointed the

new boss at Fratton Park.

United have also been plagued by injuries throughout the campaign.

Deane Smalley has netted seven goals in all competitions but has been in and out of the treatment room, while Jon Meades has been sidelined since pre-season.

Alfie Potter and Andy Whing

By Jack Johnson

jack@taylornewspapers.co.uk

are out until the New Year while captain Jake Wright has also been on the sidelines.

However, this has allowed the likes of Josh Ruffels, Callum O'Dowda, Matt Bevans, David Lynn and Sam Long an oppor-

tunity to impress.

United's away record has been impeccable this season.

As the Guardian went to print, Wilder's men had recorded six wins and three draws on the road in the league while their home form shows signs of improvement.

Some would argue the ability to score late goals is a vital component for a successful side and United have not been short of those this year.

Johnny Mullins struck late to earn a win against Bury and he also came up with a last minute equaliser against Wycombe Wanderers.

Late goals from Smalley and Danny Rose saw United come back from 2-0 down to earn a first round replay in the FA Cup against Gateshead with the former scoring a 116th minute penalty to send the U's through at the International Stadium.

Dave Kitson has also come up

with two valuable goals in recent weeks. First, an 89th minute equaliser at Fleetwood Town and then a 91st minute winner at home to Dagenham & Redbridge.

James Constable, an ever present fixture in United's attack over the last five years, has not been short of goals this season either.

Beano has netted seven goals helping him to reach over 100 strikes for the club.

This Boxing Day afternoon, United are in action at home to Plymouth Argyle before they host Scunthorpe United at the Kassam Stadium in three days time. Wilder's men begin 2014 in Wales with an away trip to Newport County before they head to Championship side Charlton Athletic in the third round of the FA Cup on January 4.

As a New Year looms, hopes and expectations are certainly high at Oxford United.



Ford looking to continue decent run

MIKE Ford will be hoping his Oxford City side continue their recent good run of form in the Skril North into the New Year.

As the Guardian went to print, City were on a three-match unbeaten run after wins against Vauxhall Motors and Worcester City and a 1-1 draw at home to Workington.

However, results have not always been positive for City this year.

After a decent pre-season, City recorded their first league win of the campaign on October 5 after a run of five defeats and four draws.

However, since the win over Stalybridge Celtic at the beginning of October, Ford's men have taken 12 points from the last eight games.

This has helped them move up the table towards the middle of the pack.

This afternoon, City welcome Gloucester City to Court Place Farm.

Pepperell hopes to build on good year

ABINGDON golfer Eddie Pepperell may have already started his 2014 season but the last 12 months have been pretty good for the 22-year-old.

Pepperell made his debut on the European Tour in December 2012 and qualified for his first major in the form of the US Open this year.

His best results were a sixth-placed finish at the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth and an eighth place at the Open de Espana.

Pepperell has been in action twice already in the new season but missed the cut on both occasions.

He carded two-over-par across two rounds in the South African Open Championship in Ekurhuleni and one-over-par in the Alfred Dunhill Championship at the beginning of December.

A season to forget for Williams



AFTER the joy of winning their first race in eight years last year, Williams had a season to forget in 2013 as they managed to score just five points from 19 races.

Valtteri Bottas' eighth-place finish in the USA was as good as it got for the Grove-based team, while Pastor Maldonado picked up his only point at July's Hungarian Grand Prix.

The team struggled with

their exhaust configuration throughout the year and Bottas' impressive performance in America only came after this was removed.

Even the Finn's spectacular third-place in the wet qualifying session for Canada failed to yield any points, and Maldonado's growing discontent led to him leaving the team, to be replaced by Felipe Massa for 2014.

Meanwhile, Enstone-based Lotus won the first race of the season in Australia with Kimi Räikkönen, but were unable to mount a serious championship challenge.

Romain Grosjean had a tough first half of the year, but ended on a good run of form as he made the podium in four of the last six races.

Räikkönen leaves Lotus to rejoin Ferrari next year, and

will be replaced by outgoing Williams driver Maldonado.

At the back, Banbury-based Marussia beat Leaffield-based Caterham to 10th in the constructors' standings for the first time in the team's history.

• Valtteri Bottas got the team's best result of eighth at the Circuit of the Americas in November (Picture courtesy of Williams F1)

Debut season a triumph for Bradley Smith

BRADLEY Smith enjoyed a successful rookie season in the premier class of motorcycle racing this year, finishing 10th in MotoGP.

The 23-year-old recorded 13 top-10 finishes aboard the Tech 3, racking up 116 points - more than any other British rookie in the history of the premier class.

Smith went on to finish second in the end of season test in Valencia and picked up the Sportsman of the Year award at the Oxfordshire Sports Awards

earlier this month.

The Oxford-born rider will have a new teammate next year with fellow Brit Cal Crutchlow departing for Ducati and Moto2 world champion Pol Espargaro filling the void.

Next year's provisional calendar has been announced with the first race on March 23 in Qatar and the final round on November 9 in Valencia. The British round at Silverstone will be held on August 31 while Argentina and Brazil have been added to the calendar.

Late surge not enough

JASON Plato put in a late season charge for the British Touring Car Championship title this year, but ultimately fell short after a number of non-scores.

Plato won eight races - more than any other driver - in 2013, but a difficult mid-season where he didn't make the podium for seven consecutive races cost him dearly.

The season had started off in the best possible way for Plato as he won the opening two races, followed by a run of strong points-scoring finishes.

A puncture cost Plato a win at Thruxton, but was followed by two wins in the first two races at Oulton Park.

However this marked the

start of his season's downturn, as a wrong tyre-call at Croft and an engine problem at Snetterton cost the Oxford-based driver two more possible wins.

Plato found himself fifth in the standings with two rounds remaining, 62 points adrift, but promptly won two of the three races at Silverstone to keep himself in the running for the title.

He won the first two races at the season finale at Brands Hatch to move up to second, but a disappointing final race, finishing 10th, marked the end of his fightback.

Plato ended the season third with 380 points, 16 behind eventual BTCC champion Andrew Jordan.

The main highlights of 2013

JANUARY

Deta Hedman is knocked out of the BDO World Championships in the quarter-finals.

London Welsh are eliminated from the Amlin Challenge Cup.

FEBRUARY

Felipe Barcelos hits four goals as Oxford City romp to a 6-2 win over Hinckley.

MARCH

London Welsh are deducted five points for fielding an ineligible player.

Lotus' Kimi Räikkönen wins the opening round of Formula One season in Australia.

APRIL

Oxford University win the 2013 BNY Mellon Boat Race.

London Welsh relegated from the Aviva Premiership.

Jamie Heapy makes his 800th appearance for Didcot Town.

MAY

Oxford United beat Oxford City 4-2 to win the Oxfordshire Senior Cup.

Abingdon United announce their voluntary relegation to the Hellenic Premier Division.

Andy Wallbridge becomes the new manager at Didcot Town after Gary Elkins' resignation.

JUNE

Eddie Pepperell finishes tied for sixth at the BMW PGA Championship and also qualifies for the US Open.

Paul Noble replaces Richie Bourne as manager of Abingdon United.

JULY

Bradley Smith records his best MotoGP result with a sixth-place finish in the German GP.

Williams F1 score their first point of the season at the Hungarian GP.

AUGUST

Oxford United begin their League Two campaign with a thumping 4-1 away victory at Portsmouth.

SEPTEMBER

Wantage Town make an impressive start to their Hellenic Premier Division campaign with seven straight wins.

OCTOBER

Andy Wallbridge resigns from Didcot Town.

Jason Plato wins four of the last six races but misses out on BTCC title.

NOVEMBER

Ian Concannon and Jamie Heapy appointed joint managers at Didcot Town.

Andy Zoldan replaces Paul Noble as Abingdon United manager.

DECEMBER

Bradley Smith wins the Sportsman of the Year award at the Oxfordshire Sports Awards. Alice Powell is crowned Oxon Sports-woman of the Year.

Oxford United regain top spot in League Two and progress to third round of FA Cup.

More Sport inside: **Motorsport:** a season to forget for Williams | **Football:** Ford looking to continue decent run

PAIR FINDING THEIR FORM

Concannon praises frontmen ahead of side's big local derby

IAN Concannon has praised the form of John Mills and Ben Whitehead as Didcot Town prepare for a local derby in Division One South & West this afternoon against North Leigh.

Mills and Whitehead have scored four goals between them in the absence of Pablo Haysham who was Diddy's top scorer at the time of the Guardian going to print.

Haysham is currently serving a seven-match ban for his dismissals against Bridgwater Town and Merthyr Town.

The frontman is set to return to action on New Year's Day when the Railwaymen make the short trip down the A34 to take on Thatcham Town.

However, Concannon and fellow joint manager Jamie Heapy may find it hard to separate the partnership that Whitehead, who

By Jack Johnson

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joined from Swindon Supermarine in November, has formed with Mills.

At the time of print, Mills had netted seven times and Whitehead, who can also play on the left-hand side of midfield, has five goals to his name.

Concannon, who is no stranger to scoring goals himself, said: "Ben has got five goals since joining from Supermarine and he has done well."

"He asked about the opportunity to play up front when Pablo was suspended and he has scored a couple of goals."

"Millsy is a clever footballer and if you give him the chances he will score goals."

"When your forwards are scor-

ing it is always reassuring and that is what they are doing at the moment."

In the Hellenic Premier Division, there are two intriguing Boxing Day matches this afternoon.

Wantage Town are away at Flackwell Heath, while there is a derby in Abingdon as Andy Zoldan's United host Paul Davis' Town at the Northcourt.

As the Guardian went to print, United and Town were at the bottom of the table but Zoldan's men were six points better off and closing in on 18th placed Newbury.

In two days time, Didcot are in action at Cinderford Town, Wantage travel to Bracknell Town, Abingdon United take on Highmoor Ibis and Abingdon Town welcome Oxford City Nomads to Culham Road.



• John Mills and Ben Whitehead have received praise from Didcot Town joint manager Ian Concannon (Pictures by Roger Neal)

Expectations high at the Kassam

OXFORD United take on Plymouth Argyle this afternoon in a game the club have dubbed

'The Big Match'.

United are hoping for a bumper crowd at the Kassam

Stadium this afternoon as Chris Wilder's men continue to do well in League Two.

See inside sport for more, as well as a guide to Oxfordshire's 2013 sporting highlights.



• Oxford United players celebrate a goal earlier this season (Picture by Steve Daniels)

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